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ON THE SEPARATION WHICH MAY TAKE PLACE BETWEEN THE SO-CALLED DEFINED AND DEFINING NOUN IN ARABIC.¹

Philippi defines the *grammatical nature* of the construct state in Semitic languages as follows :

“It is connecting, in the closest possible manner, one word with another, and shows itself in the one following the other immediately and inseparably, in the shortening of the first noun, and in the fact that, when the second noun is defined, the first is also defined by it.”

The shortening of the first noun is shown in Arabic by the loss of the Tenwîn ; in Hebrew, by vowel shortening. To show the effect of the defining force of the second noun upon the first, the following example may be adduced. If I want to say, in Semitic languages, “a daughter of the king,” defining king, but leaving daughter undefined, I cannot use the construct state; e. g., **بِنْتُ الْمَلِكِ** can only mean “the king’s only daughter,” or “the king’s daughter to whom we have referred.” “A daughter of the king” must be rendered **بِنْتُ لِلْمَلِكِ** “a daughter to the king.” With respect to the point upon which Philippi justly lays stress—“inseparable and immediate sequence”—there are some remarkable exceptions in Arabic. Such exceptions come under the category of the **فَصْلٌ** “separation” which takes place between the **مُضَافٌ** “attached word,” “first word,” and the **مُضَافٌ إِلَيْهِ** “word to which it is attached,” “second word.” Reference is made to these cases of separation in Wright’s *Arabic Grammar*, vol. II., § 90. It may, however, be interesting to the readers of *HEBRAICA* to see how the matter is treated by a native grammarian. The following is a translation from the celebrated “Watch-fire” **نار القري** of the late Nasif Al-Yazigi:

I.

وَفَصْلٌ مَفْعُولِ الْمُضَافِ مُطْلَقًا أَوْ ظَرْفِهِ بِهِ اخْتِيَارًا نَظْمًا

“And generally the separation by the **مَفْعُولِ** of the **مُضَافِ** or by its **ظَرْفِ** ‘noun of time or place’ may be used freely.”

¹ The name of the author of this article has been lost. It will be announced in a later number.

That is to say, that in the Arabic language cases occur of the separation of the مُصَافٍ from the مُصَافٍ إِلَيْهِ by means of the object of the مُصَافٍ or its accompanying noun of time and place. And this is the real annexation.¹

الإِضَافَةُ الْمَعْنَوِيَّةُ occurs when the مُصَافٍ is a مَصْدَرٌ and the مُصَافٍ إِلَيْهِ is its فَاعِلٌ. With respect to separation by the مَفْعُولُ or object we find the following line of the Ragiz:

يَفْرُقُ حَبَّ السَّنْبُلِ الْكُنَافِجِ بِالقَاعِ فَرَكَ الْقُطْنِ الْمَحَاجِ

“He cuts down the grains of the full ears in the fields as the Mihlags cut down the cotton.” That is to say,

فَرَكَ الْمَحَاجِ الْقُطْنَ

As an example of separation by means of the ظَرْفٌ we have the words of the poet:

لَمَّا رَأَتْ شَانِكَ اسْتَعْبَرْتُ لِلَّهِ دَرَّ الْيَوْمِ مَنْ لَامَهَا

“After she had seen him who hated thee she burst into tears. What a man is he who to-day rebuked her!” That is to say,

لِلَّهِ دَرَّ مَنْ لَامَهَا الْيَوْمَ

And in the merely verbal annexation (إِضَافَةُ اللَّفْظِيَّةِ) the مُصَافٍ when a *nomen agentis* is separated from one of its objects (the مُصَافٍ إِلَيْهِ) by another of its objects, as in the saying,

مَا زَالَ يُوقِنُ مَنْ يَأْمُرُكَ بِالْغِنَى وَسَوَاكَ مَانِعُ فَضْلِهِ الْمُحْتَاجُ

“And he who approaches thee is certain of riches, while others than thou withhold their benefits from the needy.” That is to say,

مَانِعُ الْمُحْتَاجِ فَضْلَهُ

Or the فَضْلُ in such an annexation can take place by means of the ظَرْفٌ, as in the saying of another,

أَرَشِنِي بِخَيْرٍ لَا أَكُونَنَّ وَمِدْحَتِي كَنَاحَتِ يَوْمًا صَخْرَةً بِعَسِيلٍ

“Satisfy me with good, that I may not become with my eulogy like him who one day chiselled a stone with a broom.” That is to say,

¹ Wright's Arabic Grammar.

كَنَاحَتِ صَخْرَةٍ يَوْمًا

And you already know that an attracted word (مَجْرُورٌ), with the particle which attracts it, is in every respect like the tsarfūn, and through this we have the saying of the poet,

هُمَا أَخَوَا فِي الْحَرْبِ مَنْ لَا أَخَا لَهُ، إِذَا خَافَ يَوْمًا نَبْوَءَ فِدَاعِهِمْ

“These too are the brothers in battle of him who has no brother; when he fears on any day a blow from the sword he calls upon them.” And the saying of another,

لَأَنْتَ مُعْتَانٌ فِي الْهَيْبَةِ مُصَابِرَةٌ تُصَلِّي بِهَا كُلُّ مَنْ عَادَاكَ نِيرَانًا

“Behold, thou art accustomed to patience in the battle; thou burnest with it whoever opposes fires to thee.”

And all this may be used freely, in opposition to him who says that it can only be employed بِالضَّرُورَةِ to satisfy poetical requirements. (Here Al-Yazigi agrees with Th. Malic in his Alfiyya.) Moreover, it occurs in prose تَتَرَّ. We have the reading of some,

وَزَيْنَ لِكَثِيرٍ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ قَتْلُ أَوْلَادِهِمْ شَرَكَائِهِمْ

“And the killing of their children by their companions was made to seem good to many idolaters.”

فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ مُخْلِفَ وَعْدِهِ رُسُلِهِ

“And do not think that God changes his promise to his apostles.”

And the saying of some of the Arabs,

تَرَكُ يَوْمًا نَفْسِكَ وَهَوَاهَا سَعْيِي لَهَا فِي رَدَاهَا

“Leaving the soul alone one day with its desires is an advance towards its destruction.”

And they allow a separation to take place by means of an oath, as Alkisāe relates, according to one reading,

هَذَا غُلَامٌ وَاللَّهِ زَيْدٌ

“This, by God, is the slave of Zaid.”

An oath (قَسَمٌ) is of the essence of a tsarfūn, since it is an attracting word (جَارٌ) with its attracted word, and separation is easy by means of it when the mudafūn has no مَعْبُولٌ. And know that this separation is restricted to

those cases where the mudaf 'ilaihi is not a pronoun; for then of necessity the two must be joined together, and faslun is impossible. Separation has also taken place when the mudafun is a مَصْدَر and the mudafun 'ilaihi its object by means of the agent of the مَصْدَر, according to the saying of the poet,

مَا إِذْ رَأَيْنَا لِلْهَوَى مِنْ طِبِّ وَلَا عَدِمْنَا قَهَرَ وَجَدْ صَبِّ

"We have not seen a medicine for love, nor have we lost a lover who has been conquered by passion."¹

مَنْعَ النَّاسِ كَافَّةً مِنْ مُحَاظَبَتِهِ أَحَدٌ بِسَيِّدِنَا .

This, however, is peculiar to poets, the opposite of the separation between the masdar and its agent, examples of which we have already had. For the failun virtually precedes; and if verbally it follows, it is still as if the mudafun were inserted with its failun.

II.

وَالْفَصْلُ بِالنَّعْتِ أَضْطِرَارًا وَالنَّدَا . قَدْ جَاءَ وَالْكُدُّ قَلِيلًا وَرَدَا

"And the separation by an adjective may be employed when poetical necessity demands it, and a vocative also occurs for a like purpose; but both are seldom used."

As an illustration of faslun by means of an epithet, we have,

نَجَوْتُ وَقَدْ بَدَّ الْمَرَادِيُّ سَيْفَهُ . مِنْ ابْنِ أَبِي شَيْخٍ الْأَبَاطِحِ طَالِبِ

"I escaped, but Al-Maradi had already welshed his sword from the son of Abu Talib, the chief of the valleys."

That is to say,

مِنْ ابْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ شَيْخِ الْأَبَاطِحِ

And by means of a vocative, as in the saying of another one,

وَقَانُ كَعْبُ بُجَيْرٍ مُنْقِذُكَ مِنْ تَعْجِيلِ تَهْلِكَةٍ وَالْخُلْدِ فِي سَقَرٍ

"The agreement by Caab with Bujeir saves thee from the hastening of destruction and from remaining forever in hell."

That is to say,

وَقَانُ بُجَيْرٍ يَا كَعْبُ

Both of these are said to be بِالضَّرُورَةِ; for neither the phrase شيخ الأباطح nor the vocative كعب is a مَعْبُول to the madafun.

¹ Irrespective of the faslun the construction in this sentence is not easy. See for illustration of it Wright, II., § 27b, 3, p. 60:—

The faslun can also take place by means of a condition, as in the saying of some,

هَذَا غُلَامٌ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَخِيكَ

“This, if it please God, is the slave of thy brother.”

And also by means of an extraneous maf'ul or tsarf, as in the words of the poet,

تَسْقِي أَمْتِيَا حَا نِدَى الْبِسْوَاكِ رِيْقَتِهَا كَمَا تَضْمَنَ مَاءُ الْبُرْنَةِ الرَّصْفُ

“She waters generously her toothbrush with the moisture of her saliva, just as the Rasaf holds back the water of the mountain.”

Or the saying of another,

كَمَا خُطَّ الْكِتَابُ بِكَفِّ يَوْمًا يَهُودِيٍّ يُقَارِبُ أَوْ يُزِيدُ

“Just as a book was written one day by the hand of a Jew, writing the lines nearer or farther from one another.”

In the first instance the general order would be,

تَسْقِي الْبِسْوَاكِ نِدَى رِيْقَتِهَا

In the second instance the order would be,

بِكَفِّ يَهُودِيٍّ يَوْمًا

The faslun, however, is little in use, and its imitation is to be avoided, *وَهُوَ نَافِرٌ فِي الْقِيَاسِ*; for the mudafun 'ilaihi is really part and parcel of the mudafun; and therefore faslun between them is strange, except that the faslun by means of ma'mulun is easier owing to the connection between it and its agent. Therefore they have permitted this extensively.